

## CLAIMS

1-11. (cancelled)

12. (previously presented) A reader for an electronic radio frequency identification system comprising a plurality of transponders to be read by the reader, the reader comprising:

a first recovery circuit for recovering and separating an upper sideband and a lower sideband of a modulated response signal from one of the transponders;

a first evaluating circuit for evaluating and selecting one of the upper sideband and the lower sideband for output to a next stage, based on the evaluation; and

a second recovery circuit for recovering and separating an upper sideband and a lower sideband of a modulated response signal from one of the transponders.

13. (currently amended) A reader as claimed in claim 12 comprising a generator for generating an energizing signal for energizing the transponders, an antenna for transmitting the energizing signal and for receiving the response signal, the antenna being connected to the energizing signal generator by a strip line and wherein the response signal is coupled to the first recovery circuit by a first directional coupler cooperating with the strip line and to the second recovery circuit by a second directional coupler cooperating with a the strip line.

14. (original) A reader as claimed in claim 13 wherein the first and second directional couplers are spaced from one another an electrical distance of between  $\lambda^c/4$  to  $\lambda^c/6$  along the strip line.

15. (currently amended) A reader as claimed in claim 12 wherein the first recovery circuit comprises a first image reject mixer having a first output for the lower sideband and a second output for the upper sideband and wherein the second recovery circuit comprises a second image reject mixer having a first output for the lower sideband and a second output for the upper sideband.

16. (currently amended) A reader as claimed in claim 15 comprising a first switch for selecting between the first output and the second output of the first image reject mixer in response to a first selection signal from the evaluating circuit and a second switch for selecting between the first output and the second output of the second mixer in response to a selection signal from the evaluating circuit.

17. (currently amended) A reader as claimed in claim 16 wherein an output of the first switch is connected to a first data decoder for providing decoded data and the output of the second switch is connected to a second decoder for providing decoded data.

18. (original) A reader as claimed in claim 17 wherein an output of the first data decoder and an output of the second data decoder are connected to a selection switch and wherein the selection switch is operative to connect a selected one of the output of the first data decoder and the output of the second data decoder to an output of the selection switch in response to a control signal from the evaluating circuit and based on minimum requirements for errors in the decoded data.

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